United Nations A/ES-10/691–S/2015/736

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
24 September 2015

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 22 September 2015 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

In follow-up to our previous letter, dated 14 September 2015 (A/ES-10/690-S/2015/707), I must continue to draw your urgent attention to the dangerously rising tensions in Occupied East Jerusalem. The illegal policies and the constant provocations and incitement by Israel, the occupying Power, and its extremist settlers against the Palestinian people, their land and their holy places, especially at Al-Aqsa Mosque compound (Haram al-Sharif), continue to exacerbate tensions and religious sensitivities between the Palestinian people and the occupying Power and risk further destabilization of an already very fragile situation on the ground.

Having said the above, today we bring to your immediate attention the chances for the situation to deteriorate even further, as Israel, the occupying Power, intensifies its incitement and provocation as Palestinian Muslims prepare to commemorate Eid al-Adha, which starts on Thursday, 24 September 2015. In that regard, while the international community, including the Security Council, has called upon the occupying Power to exercise restraint, refrain from provocative actions and rhetoric, and uphold the historic status quo at Haram al-Sharif — in word and in practice, the occupying Power, along with its extremist settlers, has done the exact opposite. In fact, the Prime Minister of Israel has ordered that additional checkpoints be erected throughout Occupied East Jerusalem, as well as calling for the deployment of an additional 800 reservists, along with thousands of so-called border police, in the city. In addition, as of yesterday, Israeli occupying forces have imposed restrictions on the entry of Muslims to Al-Aqsa compound, closing all but three of the compound's gates, as well as allowing only men over 40 years of age to enter the compound, all while completely barring women from entering. Israel's latest provocations, incitements and violations of the Palestinian people's human rights, including their right to worship, will surely do nothing to "restore calm", but rather create the perfect recipe for clashes and violence to ensue and intensify.

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Clearly, the situation is still extremely tense following last week's fierce attacks by Israeli occupying forces and extremist settlers against Palestinian worshippers in Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. During those attacks, the occupying forces used excessive force to prevent the entry of Palestinian worshippers and caused serious injuries to hundreds of worshippers through their use of tear gas, stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets. Moreover, the excessive and disproportionate use of force by Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians caused clashes to erupt in many East Jerusalem neighbourhoods and villages, in which many more Palestinian civilians were injured, including Saly Yousif Muhessien, 13 years of age, who was injured when she was shot in the neck with a rubber-coated steel bullet. Such gruesome violations against children will only continue as the occupying Power continues to enjoy a culture of impunity, which has shielded its forces from being held accountable for crimes that they have committed against Palestinian civilians, including children. This culture of impunity is evident in the outrageous request by the Israeli Prime Minister, calling upon Israel's Attorney General to "allow" occupying forces to employ open-fire regulations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including sniper fire and the use of rifles fitted with sniper scopes, at Palestinian stone throwers. In addition to the above, over the past week Israeli occupying forces have also detained more than 150 Palestinians, the majority ranging from 13 to 20 years of age.

We continue to reiterate that all such illegal Israeli actions at Haram al-Sharif and throughout the rest of Occupied East Jerusalem are in violation of the numerous relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for a cessation of all Israeli policies and measures aimed at altering the character, legal status and demography of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and for respect by Israel, the occupying Power, of its obligations under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits such actions.

Moreover, we believe that all such acts of incitement against holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as acts of the ongoing and deliberate provocations against the Palestinian people by the occupying Power, whether by the Government of Israel, its occupying forces or its illegal settlers, warrant serious and immediate attention by the international community, including by the Security Council, in line with its primary duty under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. We call upon the international community to act with urgency and responsibility, especially in the light of the upcoming Eid al-Adha holiday, to ensure the de-escalation of this perilous situation in Occupied East Jerusalem and to bring a halt to the occupying Power's violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and to immediately withdraw its forces from around Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

Before concluding, I regret also to inform you of the killing today of Hadeel Al-Hashlamon, 18 years of age, who was shot three times by Israeli occupying forces at a checkpoint in Al-Khalil (Hebron) and left to bleed on the pavement for approximately 30 minutes before she received treatment. Also today, Diaa' Al-Talahmah, 21 years of age, was killed during clashes with Israeli occupying forces in the village of Khursa, near Dora in southern Al-Khalil. These latest killings are only two of the hundreds of examples of deliberate and brutal killings by Israeli occupying forces, which continue to further heighten tensions and contribute to fomenting deep anger and agitation among the Palestinian people, as they confirm Israel's total disregard for Palestinian lives. The international community must take

measures to ensure that Israel, the occupying Power, is held accountable for all such crimes and is compelled to cease all of its violations against the Palestinian civilian population under its occupation.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 553 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 14 September 2015 (A/ES-10/690-S/2015/707), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations